

PROPOSED STATEMENT BY L. MENDEL RIVERS, CHAIRMAN, ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

I would like to comment on the press reports which link the National Student Association with CIA in undertakings abroad in support of democratic student organizations. In my opinion the unfortunate editorializing approach of the full-page Ramparts ad tends to cast both the NSA and CIA in a conspiratorial light to hoodwink the American people, particularly campus leaders. What is ignored in the ill-conceived ad and glossed over in the press reports is the genesis of this noteworthy and certainly effective co-operation between the US Government and the US student movement in a mutually acceptable effort to provide a democratic alternative to the massive effort of the Communist powers to gain control of international and national student organizations in the non-Communist countries. This threat, which any objective observer--both private and government--recognized in the early 1950's may have been reduced somewhat--as the NSA leaders point out--but only as a direct result of the effective thrust of the NSA foreign program.

Over the years I have had the privilege of hearing of the salient efforts of these articulate young Americans--many of whom I know have taken strong issue with my party and myself on specific issues. While I cannot accept the NSA stand on US Government involvement in the Dominican Republic, Vietnam, Civil Rights, I have always accepted and encouraged their right and responsibility to address national issues with the same freedom and

responsible posture that they have shown in the international field and in their day-to-day bi-lateral relations with foreign student groups.

The fact that the NSA--which is a confederation of student governments at American colleges and universities, a private voluntary organization which serves the needs of students engaged in both domestic and international activities--has had a strictly limited relationship with the US Government for the last fifteen years should come as no shock to those who have any concept of the 70 million dollar Soviet effort through the International Union of Students and other recognized fronts groups to create disorder by extensive support to both willing and unwitting student movements in the non-Communist countries.

When you add the estimated cost to the Soviets of their World Youth Festivals--ranging from the 150 million dollars for the 1950 event in Moscow to 25 million dollars for the Helsinki Festival in 1962, you can see the magnitude of the Communist thrust. The Communist effort in the student field is obviously quite diverse and thus we do not know the extent of their specific financial support to individual groups around the world. We estimate, however, that a minimum of 4.5 million dollars of the overall IUS annual budget goes for political and organizational activities in non-Communist countries.

The effort was recognized early in the 1950's not only by the professional observers in CIA but equally by American student leaders active in the international field. They had ideas but no money; they could not afford the charge of being

subsidized by the US Government in their work abroad. Our assistance therefore had to be discreet. And I think it's vitally important that, at no time, has the government been able or attempted to control the policies set by NSA's Student Government. It's just as important to remember that this mutual effort has been on a steadily declining basis--as NSA became more self-sufficient, the government could and did pull back. Two years ago, NSA said it preferred to go ahead on its own and the government happily withdrew. The support now offered is nominal and government contacts negligible.

All of these are things overlooked by the press reports this morning, in the sensationalism of Rampart's advertising. Putting the last fifteen years together, I say it is fortunate that NSA student groups abroad could benefit from US Government help, with no strings attached, and that some of our more forceful young leaders of tomorrow could take active roles in the international politics which so deeply affect the lives of every American.